1900s provides the basis for many state water protection programs. In Ka sas, for example, this historical base for political support was broaden over the years with occasional oil field brine pollution incidents. Howev< as in several states, it was the major studies under Section 208 of the Cle Water Act in the 1970s that led to the Kansas Ground Water Protection PI and to revisions of the state's ground water and oil conservation legislatio Legislation designating areas where overpumping threatened the quality ground water was also passed.

Another state that has a long history of public interest in and awareness water issues is Wisconsin. Public awareness of potential ground water co tamination in Wisconsin seems to arise from the state's long history of co cern regarding environmental and ecological issues rather than a series public health episodes. In Wisconsin, citizens, the media, and many sm; businesses whose incomes are tied to tourism have long been aware of t impact of water pollution. For instance, the League of Women Voters co ducted studies and a series of conferences from 1950 on, concluding th ground and surface water should be regarded as important resources ai that protecting the quality of the water was of paramount importance to t future of Wisconsin. Through the involvement and interest of many grou such as this, major water legislation was passed by the mid-1960s that ci ated the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), which h since developed an innovative ground water protection program.

One program that emerged out of the DNR legislation is the Wiscons Public Intervener Office, which translates understanding and awareness the water problems into activities that produce compliance with state r quirements. It was originally conceived to be a "watchdog" over the ne Department of Natural Resources and was established under the auspices the attorney general. For the past 10 years, the attorney general has a pointed two public interveners and supporting clerical staff. In additio the University of Wisconsin Law School has recently developed a clinic program whereby eight law students work in the public intervened offi for 20 hours a week. The attorney general also established an advisory cor mittee for the office, which now is legally mandated, whose major functic is to screen the various requests for action, thereby helping to insulate tl public intervener from political pressure. Major new ground water prote tion legislation was passed in 1984 in which the role of the public interven was further strengthened by allowing for initiation of lawsuits questionii the constitutionality of laws.

The public intervener handles a variety of subject matters, and priva individuals can come to this office for help in dealing with environment problems. Under the well compensation program, victims can sue the pc luter. The intervener reviews and comments on the U.S. Corps of Engines